

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
CALIFORNIA RECREATIONAL FISHERY SURVEY PROGRAM REVIEW

Mr. Russell Porter (Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission) briefed the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) about updates to the California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS), which was implemented in January 2004, replacing the Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey (MRFSS) in California. The CRFS was designed to address data needs that the MRFSS was unable to provide for recreational fisheries management in California. CRFS samples all sport fisheries and is intended to provide monthly catch and effort estimates with only a one-month time lag. The Recreational Fishery Information Network (RecFIN) statistical subcommittee currently reviews the methodologies used in CRFS from a statistical sampling point of view. However, the SSC suggests that a separate review may be needed for methods to project inseason catch.

Collection of discard information is not standardized among the three West Coast states. Currently, California categorizes discards into a dead or alive category, whereas Oregon and Washington combine all discards into a single category. The SSC recommends that each state assign discards into either an alive or dead category, as this will allow a more accurate assignment if hooking/handling mortality rates to the “alive” portion of the discards.

During 2004, NMFS employed a household phone survey in California using MRFSS. Mr. Porter stated that this effort was expected to continue for two or three years, so a comparison of the effort and catch statistics generated from CRFS and MRFSS can be made. The SSC recommends continuation of the telephone survey so that CRFS and MRFSS datasets can be compared to ensure the historical recreational data from MRFSS can be used with the new CRFS data.

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